

Sept. 21, 2018

Dear Students,

I hope this information is helpful to all and addresses many of the questions from students who have been unable to attend the meeting held on Wednesday in Cambridge by Residence Life, the Residence Hall Association meeting Thursday evening or tonight's student forum meeting (**All students are welcome to join us tonight at 7:45 p.m. in the Lane Atkinson Room – 232.** I, VP for Administration and Finance Leon Wyden, and Assistant VP for Student Affairs Dr. Jeff Graham will be there.).

Please allow me to focus first on Cambridge and then the residence halls in the lower quad in general.

Cambridge Hall. In order to address indoor air quality issues in Cambridge Hall, the building had a new chiller (air conditioning unit) installed in June. We suspected the air quality issues, including some areas of mold, were occurring because of the air-handling equipment in Cambridge, and the new chiller was installed to help with that. We then brought in an industrial hygienist firm to determine the level of mold remediation that was needed.

Once the hall was closed this summer following our summer camps, we brought in an outside firm to remove the mold based on the industrial hygienist recommendations, especially in the bathroom areas. That process took several weeks. Unfortunately, the mechanical upgrades did not have the desired effect, and the significant rain we had in this area over the summer did not help.

Following the mold abatement in August and even more rain, we noticed additional moisture issues, including those we think are related to the mechanical upgrades. Rather than wait when we were still exploring the most effective ways to address the problem, we decided the best decision would be to close Cambridge and move students before we got too far into the semester and the weather got colder. (I understand other campuses in the region are also dealing with moisture issues because of the extreme wet weather. We also experienced a similar issue in one of our academic buildings and are taking similar steps to remediate the problem there.)

I have asked the Residence Life Office to work with students to minimize disruption as best they can. For students who are going from singles to doubles, I have asked Residence Life to minimize doubling as much as possible and, in January, to review our housing occupancy following December graduations to see if we can restore additional singles to those students. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Residence Life.

Lower Quad Residence Halls, including Cambridge. If you are not aware, three years ago, Dr. Bowling, as interim president, was able to convince the Board of Regents, which oversees FSU, to allow us to borrow \$14.4 million to renovate the five lower quad residence halls, Annapolis, Cumberland, Cambridge, Westminster, and Frederick. We recognized the need to upgrade these residence halls and have been active in these renovations. This follows renovations made to upper quad halls, which are older, several years ago.

For those in Cumberland, you have already seen a number of upgrades, including new flooring throughout, new lighting and new paint. Annapolis, which has been closed for a year, should be completed in renovations later this year. In addition to new lighting, flooring, painting, and study areas, we are redesigning the bathrooms to create greater privacy and adding bathrooms on each floor. Once Annapolis is completed, we want to upgrade the bathrooms in Cumberland in a similar manner.

The schedule is for us to then turn our attention to Cambridge for significant renovations. Given the moisture issues we have had, we are bringing in an outside firm to give us an assessment of Cambridge's future. The question is whether it is worth renovating or not, that is, what will it cost to ensure we don't have recurring problems. Once we get that report, we will decide on next steps for Cambridge.

After that, we will then turn our attention to Westminster and Frederick for renovations. The renovations are occurring over several years, and the plan is to have no more than one of these residence halls off-line and vacant at a time (as Annapolis is now).

I also want you to know that we have taken some additional, more immediate steps based on our inspection of residence halls this summer. First, new lounge furniture for the halls has been ordered. Some just arrived, and we are waiting for delivery of the rest in the coming weeks. Also, we were not happy with the condition of some of the rooms at the beginning of the semester, so we are changing our plans next summer to ensure we have plenty of time to prepare rooms for fall occupancy. (Residence Halls are used by the numerous summer camps that are held on campus.) Lastly, we have reviewed our work-order process. While we know facilities staff are responding to many requests, we want to be sure all are handled in a timely and efficient manner. I'll share more about those changes as we make them.

I do apologize for the inconveniences that have occurred. We are trying our best to minimize the disruption to students as much as possible, while keeping the facilities safe for everyone. I encourage individuals who have specific needs to reach out to the Residence Life Office first (rlo@frostburg.edu, 301-687-4121) in an effort to resolve any issues. We are listening and doing what we can.

Ronald Nowaczyk, PhD
President
Frostburg State University
101 Braddock Road
Frostburg, MD 21532-2303

Voice: 301.687.4111
Fax: 301.687.7070



One University. A World of Experiences.